

*Israel also announces that he's helped NY veterans recoup more than \$6.4 million in owed benefits*

Northport, NY—Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) joined the chorus of East Northport's Bellerose Avenue Elementary School to deliver homemade valentines to and perform songs for veterans at the Northport VA Medical Center. Israel also reaffirmed his commitment to helping New York's veterans and announced his success in helping veterans in his district recoup more than \$6.4 million in owed benefits.

Rep. Israel said, "While the valentines and songs are meant to bring joy to the veterans at the Northport VA, the students of Bellerose Avenue Elementary School will also learn a valuable lesson by meeting the brave men and women who gave so much for our country. Yet, the best way we can honor our veterans is by delivering on the promises they were given when they were recruited by the armed forces. That's why I will continue fighting to ensure that every veteran who is owed benefits receives them."

During the week of Valentine's Day each year, the Department of Veterans Affairs hosts the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans' Program, better known as "Valentines for Vets." This is a program to pay tribute and express appreciation to hospitalized veterans. Currently, more than 98,000 veterans are cared for in VA medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciles and nursing homes.

Rep. Israel also spoke of the more than \$6.4 million in retroactive benefits he has been able to secure for veterans during his tenure in Congress.

Israel said, "Some of the proudest moments of my career have been those in which I am able to secure medals or benefits for veterans who rightfully deserve them. I will continue to fight to make sure that our veterans receive their medals and benefits, but I hope in the future they are able to receive them without having to wait or jump through hoops to get them."